

# ***Alabama Automobile Registration***

**THIS PAMPHLET** contains basic information on this particular legal topic for your general information. If you have specific questions, contact the Legal Assistance Office.



## **Legal Assistance Office** Client Services Division

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### Alabama Automobile Registration

#### Introduction

One of the most frequently asked questions by Servicemembers stationed at Fort Rucker is whether they and their immediate Family members have to register their privately owned vehicles in Alabama. Additionally, many newly assigned Servicemembers wonder if they are required to obtain an Alabama driver's license.

#### Do I need to register my vehicle in Alabama?

Under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA), military members who comply with the motor vehicle registration requirement of the state of their legal residence *do not* have to register their vehicles in the state where they are stationed pursuant to military orders. This means that Servicemembers (and their immediate Family) assigned to Fort Rucker can continue to drive in Alabama without registering their vehicles in Alabama as long as their registration from their home state of legal residence is current. At the time their registration expires, military members can renew their home-state registration or register the vehicles in Alabama.

In accordance with the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA), military personnel may display a current license plate from their home state or from the state the Servicemember is currently stationed in.

#### What if the Soldier deploys/PCSs/leaves and family remains in Alabama?

When a nonresident Servicemember stationed in Alabama—whose motor vehicles are currently registered in their home state—is shipped overseas leaving immediate Family members here, the Family members are not required to register their motor vehicles in Alabama. However, if the Servicemember returns from overseas and moves to another state, the Family members must then register any motor vehicles operated in Alabama if they opt to remain in the state without the Servicemember.

Immediate Family includes the spouse of any Servicemember, as well as any natural, adoptive, or step-child of the Servicemember.

#### When is registration in Alabama required?

All individuals who choose to become Alabama legal residents (such as those who apply for an Alabama homestead exemption) must register their vehicles with the state of Alabama. Additionally, anyone who registers a vehicle in Alabama must pay all taxes and fees unless he or she qualifies for exemptions.

Also, when members purchase vehicles out-of-state and then bring them into Alabama, they must pay an Alabama sales tax *if* a sales tax was not paid in the state where the vehicle was purchased. Finally, if a vehicle is purchased by a nonresident from an individual in Alabama, Alabama sales tax must also be paid.





### Do I have to get an Alabama Driver's License?

All legal residents of the state of Alabama must obtain an Alabama driver's license to drive in Alabama. However, Servicemembers stationed in Alabama and their dependents are not required to obtain an Alabama driver's license to drive in Alabama if they already have a *valid and current* driver's license from the state of their legal residence. Please note that you are normally required to update your address on your Driver's License, even when you no longer physically reside in the state that issued your license. Contact your issuing state Department of Motor Vehicles for more information.

### Where should I register my vehicle?

Your vehicle should be registered in the county in which you reside. If you live on-post, you should register your vehicle in Dale County. Registration for Dale County is completed at the courthouse in Ozark, Alabama (275 N Union Ave, Ozark, AL 36360). If you decide to live off-post, your vehicle must be registered in the county in which you live. Regardless of which county you register your vehicles, remember to ask about any and all exemptions to which you may be entitled.



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